

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 DODE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07

L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-05 /063 W

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R 171400Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 840

INFO US MISSION NATO 518

USCINCEUR

JUSMG/MAAG MADRID

16TH AIR FORCE, SPAIN

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON

COMNAVACTS, ROTA

CONFIDENTIAL MADRID 301

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP

SUBJ: BASE NEGOTIATIONS: COMMENTS OF SPANISH

NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBER

1. FOLLOWING PARAS RELATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND LT. COL. JOSE DURET, MEMBER OF SPANISH NAVY MINISTRY LEGAL STAFF AS WELL AS SPANISH NEGOTIATING TEAM. DURET HAS LONG INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY, HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN BASE MATTERS ONE WAY OR ANOTHER SINCE 1957. HE WAS ILL DURING MONTH OF DECEMBER AND CONSEQUENTLY MISSED WASHINGTON ROUND.

2. DURET SAID HE RECEIVED IMPRESSION SPANISH MILITARY MEMBERS HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED OVER SECOND ROUND. MORE HAD BEEN EXPECTED OF WASH MEETING, SINCE MUCH OF WHAT WAS DISCUSSED HAD ALREADY BEEN TAKEN UP IN NOVEMBER.

3. DURET GAVE SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO MENTION OF EXERCISES, AND IN PARTICULAR FLAMENCO DANCE, AT WASHINGTON SESSION. SPANISH CLEARLY DO NOT CONSIDER EXERCISES IN THEMSELVES--

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EVEN ON SCALE OF FLAMENCO DANCE--TO REPRESENT KIND OF NEW

DEFENSE COOPERATION THEY HAVE IN MIND. DURET REMINDED EMBOFF THAT SPANISH EXERCISE WITH FRENCH AND DESPITE GIBRALTAR, EVEN HOLD NAVAL EXERCISES WITH BRITISH.

4. WHILE SPANISH MILITARY NOT AS CONCERNED WITH PUBLIC OPINION ASPECTS OF SECURITY GUARANTEE AS SUCH, IT NEVERTHELESS HAD TO FACT FACT THAT PUBLIC OPINION MATTERED. MOREOVER SPANISH MILITARY WERE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN KIND OF MILITARY COOPERATION WHICH SHOULD AUTOMATICALLY GROW OUT OF CLOSER DEFENSE TIES. AS AN EXAMPLE, DURET REFERRED TO ANTI-SUBMARINE SURVEILLANCE OF GIBRALTAR STRAITS WHICH HE SAID WAS NOW BEING PERFORMED BY U.S. IF U.S. COULD CARVE OUT ROLE FOR SPAIN, PROVIDE FOR APPROPRIATE JOINT PLANNING WITH RELATED TRAINING, AS WELL AS HELP IN OBTAINING EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO DO JOB, THIS WOULD REPRESENT WHAT SPANISH NAVY, AT LEAST, WOULD HAVE IN MIND.

5. DURET REJECTED IDEA--PRESENTED BY NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL (MADRID 229)-THAT U.S. PRESENCE BETTER GUARANTOR OF SPAIN'S SECURITY THAN PHRASEOLOGY OF A TREATY. SAID BASES "EXISTENCE" INVITED ATTACK, PARTICULARLY FOR TORREJON AND ROTA. WITHOUT U.S. PRESENCE, THERE WOULD BE NO IMMEDIATE NEED FOR DEFENSE IN FIRST PLACE.

6. EMBOFF ASKED DURET WHICH HE THOUGHT MORE OBJECTIONABLE FROM SPANISH POINT OF VIEW, TORREJON OR ROTA. HIS REPLY WAS TORREJON, WHICH THEN PROMPTED HIM TO VOLUNTEER HIS "PERSONAL OPINION" AS THE ONLY WAY "OUT" OF WHAT HE ENVISAGED AS AN IMPASSE BETWEEN U.S. DESIRE FOR RENEWAL OF CURRENT AGREEMENT AND SPANISH DESIRE FOR SECURITY COMMITMENT. DURET THOUGHT A VISIBLE, PROGRESSIVE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. PRESENCE WOULD SATISFY PUBLIC OPINION IN SPAIN, AND HE ADDED PROBABLY IN U.S. AS WELL. HE DID NOT SPECIFY AREAS WHERE WITHDRAWAL MIGHT TAKE PLACE, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT MENTION OF TORREJON PROMPTED THIS SPECULATION ON HIS PART. EMBOFF ALSO HAD DISTINCT IMPRESSION THIS REFLECTED MORE THAN DURET'S "PERSONAL OPINION", BUT RATHER ALTERNATIVES SPANISH PROBABLY HAVE UNDER CONSIDERATION.

7. COMMENT: WHILE REFERENCE TO FLAMENCO DANCE AND OTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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EXERCISES MIGHT HAVE SERVED AS USEFUL REMINDER THAT FOR OUR PART WE WERE SERIOUS ABOUT DEVELOPING AREAS OF COOPERATION CALLED FOR UNDER ANNUAL DEFENSE COMPABILITY PLAN WORKED OUT UNDER CURRENT AGREEMENT, POINT NOW APPEARS MOOT AND PERHAPS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BASES, NEGOTIATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY CAPABILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MADRID00301
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750019-0470
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750142/aaaablgg.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <24 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BASE NEGOTIATIONS: COMMENTS OF SPANISH NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBER
TAGS: PFOR, MARR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006